**Haley Paiva**

**A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini**

**Summary**: In this section the reader learns about a young girl named Laila. She comes from a modern family during the Soviet era. Babi, her father, always talks to Laila about becoming something in life and never stopping her education. Laila has a best friend named Tariq who is a few years older than her. This section flew by because the years pass by very quickly and the read sees the dramatic changes throughout Kabul. Laila has two older brothers who were fighting in the war against the Soviets. Her mother, Mammy, was deeply distraught by this and was in a constant state of depression. Years passed and there is news that the boys were killed in battle, which sends Mammy over the edge. Laila however, not knowing her brothers, does not grieve as her mother and is forced to live forever in their shadow. Mammy eventually realized that Laila is hurt and reaches out to her to talk about the lives her brothers once lived. Years pass once again and the Soviets leave Kabul and Afghanistan all together. This raises Mammy out of her depression and immediately redirects her attention to reconnecting with her neighbors and family. Babi and Laila stick together through it all becoming closer than ever. Additionally, the connection has been growing between Laila and Tariq who are now no longer children playing in the streets but young adults. Once the Soviets leave it becomes a battle for power between two very strong and violent parties. Kabul is in a constant state of fear for there a bombs going off constantly all around. It becomes so serious that Babi withdraws Laila from school and begins to teach her himself in his study. It is around this time that things really being to heat up between Laila and Tariq because they know that what they have is special and it has always been about the two of them. One day Tariq tells Laila that is family is moving away because of the fighting. She is completely broken down by this and speechless. The next moments in the book tell of a spontaneous, sinful, forbidden encounter between the two of them that will never be forgotten. Tariq tells her to come with his family for he wants to marry her, but she cannot leave her father like that. Therefore, Laila makes Tariq leave for she does not want to say goodbye for it will be too painful. In the next few days Babi is able to convince Mammy to leave Kabul and go to Peshawar. The family begins to pack only what is absolutely necessary and agree to sell the rest. When moving boxes from the house to the taxi the unthinkable strikes. A flash bomb hits their house killing both parents, and leaving Laila in excruciating pain coming in and out of consciousness. In the next section the book flips back into Mariam’s view. Rasheed found Laila in the shambles of her house and brings her home where he and Mariam nurse her back to health. Laila begins to remember pieces of what happened and fragments from her past. She is constantly anxious and is not fully recovered when a visitor by the name of Abdul Sharif comes to see her. He tells the story of how he sent his wife and children away from Kabul before himself because he was very sick. Upon entering the special unit he was placed next to Tariq. Abdul was able to pick up Tariq’s accident through the nurses talk. On his way to Peshawar, the group that he was traveling with was blown up. Everyone died except for two girls and Tariq, who was the only one left in the hospital. One night however Abdul heard beeps and sirens coming from Tariq’s bed; when he woke up the next morning Tariq was no longer alive. Before his passing though, Tariq told Abdul of his life back home in Kabul and about the love of his life, Laila. Abdul was told to find her before following his family to a new land to tell her that Tariq misses her. Laila was completely crushed and remembered the time when Babi, Tariq, and her traveled to see the Buddha and relaxed while enjoying life together.

**Analysis**: While reading this part of the book I went through many different emotions. At the beginning when hearing of Laila’s parents and how her mother viewed her as a leftover I felt sorry for Laila. I pitied her for the fact that she only had one parent who truly cared about her. Then as I read on I saw how close her and Babi were and it made me feel jealous. Babi would do anything for her and wanted her to be the absolute best she could be. Additionally, I was joyous to read about the romance between Laila and Tariq. I was beautiful to see their relationship grow and strengthen through the years even through all the “awkward” years of childhood. I am truly envious of their relationship. Their friendship showed what true love was all about even though they were never officially together. My heart broke as I read about Tariq moving away and Laila’s family going through the tragic accident. I felt her world get flipped upside down before she even knew what hit her. Then when Abdul came to visit I got my hopes up again thinking that Laila and Tariq’s love would really prevail just to be let down by the horrid news Tariq had passed. This book takes me through a rollercoaster of various emotions but right now I am left feeling sad and glad that this is not the end of her story, who knows maybe things will turn around for her.

**Application**: This section of the book is all about change of power. It is human nature to follow what is commanded and obey. When the Soviets were in control of Afghanistan, women were given rights and had sight of a positive future. Once the battles began between the opposing parties everyone lived in fear. This was in human nature because lives were placed in danger by careless, power hungry men. Laila’s life was changed for good when her parents and Tariq passed away. Feeling depressed and hopeless is expected when loved ones are not longer in one’s life.